

Interpreting INDOT Travel Direction

Many INDOT traffic data reports include information broken down by travel direction. Most often, these directions are listed as “**Positive**” or “**Negative**.” They may also be listed as “**POS**” and “**NEG**” or “**POS DIR**” and “**NEG DIR**” or some other variation. “**Increasing**” and “**Decreasing**” or “**I**” and “**D**” are also used.

The Positive travel direction is the direction in which the mile posts are going up.

Like many states and the Interstate Highway System, Indiana assigns the beginning of a route (the zero mile post) at the western end of West to East routes (even numbered) and the southern end of South to North routes (odd numbered).

So, *generally* speaking;

Northbound = Positive

Southbound = Negative

Eastbound = Positive

Westbound = Negative

There are some notable exceptions to this chart. Chief among them is I-465 around Indianapolis where the positive travel direction is clockwise around the loop. This results in the south side and east side having “Positive” direction opposite from the above chart.

Other situations that might cause a reversal of the above chart include segments where two highways share an alignment, called a **Travel Over**. These concurrent routes may have conflicting Positive directions. The Positive direction for the segment is determined by the **Primary** Route. The Primary route is the route with the higher system designation. Interstates are primary over US routes which are primary over State Routes. In the case where both routes have the same system designation, the Primary route is the route with the lower number. This means that I-70 is Primary where US 40 travels over it and that US 6 is Primary where SR 13 travels over. I-65 is Primary where I-70 travels over in the opposite direction. US 6 is Primary in the Eastbound direction where US 33 travels over it in the opposite direction. Again, there are exceptions to this. I-465 is the Primary Route for its entire length even though it shares an alignment with I-74.